

REMARKS

The Examiner's Action dated December 9, 2004, has been reviewed in detail. Reconsideration of the claims of the instant application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Applicants would like to extend their appreciation to the Examiner for the time and attention accorded this case. As will be set forth in detail herebelow, the issues raised in the Examiner's Action dated December 9, 2004, when reconsidered in light of the foregoing amendments and the following comments, should be resolved in Applicants' favor.

As of the Action dated December 9, 2004, Claims 1-15 and 17-45 were pending in the instant application. By this Amendment, Claims 28-45 have been cancelled without prejudice.

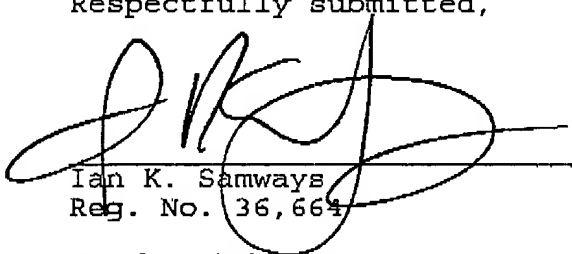
The undersigned is most grateful for the courtesies extended by the Examiner in a telephonic interview on January 21, 2005. During the interview, the outstanding Action was discussed. Though the Action nominally constitutes an election requirement, the Examiner noted that if Claims 28-45 were cancelled then the requirement to elect a "species" would be obviated. This is consistent with other previous conversations with the Examiner.

Accordingly, Claims 28-45 have been cancelled herein without prejudice in order to obviate the "election requirement". Reconsideration and withdrawal of the election requirement are thus hereby respectfully requested. Applicants reserve the right to pursue a continuing application under 35 U.S.C. 120 directed to any or all of the presently cancelled Claims 28-45.

It is respectfully submitted that the remaining Claims 1-15 and 17-27 are allowable in their present form. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the instant application, including Claims 1-15 and 17-27, is presently in condition for allowance. Notice to the effect is hereby earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: January 26, 2005



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